

THE PRESIDENT'S INTELLIGENCE CHECKLIST

28 OCT 1961

~~TOP SECRET~~

1. Berlin

- a) The Soviet tanks drawn up at the Friedrichstrasse checkpoint were withdrawn this morning, according to press reports from Berlin. The US tanks facing them were also pulled out soon afterward;
- b) Gromyko was completely unbending in his talks with Ambassador Thompson yesterday, saying that if US actions continue "they will be regarded as an act of provocative armed invasion of GDR territory, and the German Democratic Republic will be given necessary support for purposes of ending such actions." He went beyond earlier claims to assert in effect that the East German police have complete authority over entry into the Soviet sector;
- c) Thompson's preliminary conclusion is that Moscow thinks it has a good issue and will be prepared to use force;
- d) Khrushchev did not touch directly on the access issue in his speech to the Party Congress yesterday, but he said again that he was not setting any specific deadline on Berlin negotiations and urged "a businesslike and fair solution of the problem."

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2. Soviet Party Congress

a) Khrushchev's speech yesterday probably marked the end of the talking stage, but the meeting will continue for several more days, ending with the election of the party's chief organs.

b) Khrushchev's remarks on Albania seemed to indicate that the point of no return has been reached in their relations. He came close to pinning the blame for the split directly on Peiping.

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3. Sihanouk turns rage on US over Thai dispute

a) His virulent attack on the US in a speech on Thursday leads diplomats in Phnom Penh to think he is at least temporarily deranged and to fear that he may do something reckless such as appealing for Chinese Communist military assistance:

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4. South Vietnam

The Viet Cong's Eastern Nambo Inter-provincial Command instructed subordinate units on 20 October that "the enemy is entering a period of being completely on the defensive...take the initiative." The same message points out, however, that "the enemy has retaken a number of places," and implies that the Communists have their problems too, by stating that cadres must "combat the feeling of wanting to be left in peace." This and other recent messages reflect Viet Cong concern about government efforts to get at their rice supply, and suggest steps to conceal foodstuffs. The Communists have been trying to create a self-sufficient food base.

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5. [redacted]
[redacted] Soviet Congress

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Khrushchev does not contemplate any change in his peaceful coexistence policy and does look forward to further high-level talks with West. [redacted]

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NOTES

- A. Yesterday Reuters reported from the Far East that Peiping radio had broadcast warnings to the population in North China to take steps against the danger of radioactive fallout. However, these broadcasts, although on Peiping radio's frequency, originated outside Communist China.
- B. It now seems fairly certain that Phoumi is only giving lip service to the goal of a Laotian coalition--a line which risks driving Souvanna closer to the Communists.
- C. Prospects for the naming of a new German government on Monday have faded as the Christian Democrats and Free Democrats continue to disagree over coalition arrangements. 50X2
- D. Yesterday's nuclear test in the Novaya Zemlya area 50X1
- E. The Syrian government is uncertain about how much political activity it will permit, but asserts that it is determined not to lift the ban on the Communist party.
- F. Pressures for an "opening to the left" from one of the coalition parties may result in the fall of the present Italian government, with the issue likely to come to a head soon after the first of next month.

THE DIRECTOR OF CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE

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